

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the preceding amendments and following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-7, 11-24, 27-33 and 41-51 are pending in this application, of which claims 34-40 are withdrawn as being directed to a non-elected invention. By this Amendment, claims 1, 12, 14, 15, and 23 are amended; claims 10, 25, 26, and 34-40 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein; and claims 41-51 are added. No new matter is added as amended claim 1 includes the subject matter of *at least* claims 10 and 23-26. Claims 1 and 41 are the independent claims.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that the Information Disclosure Statement filed on July 9, 2010, has been considered.

Applicants respectfully note that the present action does not indicate that the drawings have been accepted by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner's next communication include an indication as to the acceptability of the filed drawings or as to any perceived deficiencies so that the Applicants may have a full and fair opportunity to submit appropriate amendments and/or corrections to the drawings.

Election/Restriction Requirement

Applicants acknowledge the election of Group I, of which claims 1-33 read on, and claims 34-40 have been withdrawn by the Examiner as being directed to a non-

elected invention. Accordingly, by this Amendment, Applicants have cancelled the non-elected claims.

Applicants respectfully reserve the right to file a divisional application(s) directed to the non-elected invention, i.e., claims 34-40.

Entry of After Final Amendment

Entry of this amendment is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) ***place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein***; (b) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; (c) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the Amendment is thus respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 26 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

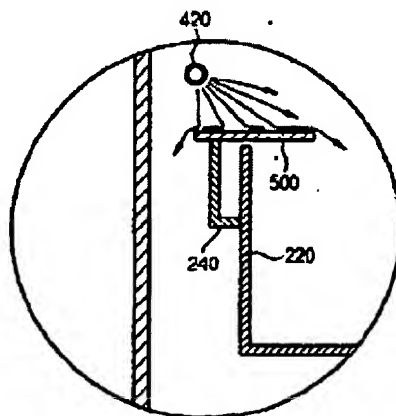
Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter found in claim 26. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include **all** of the allowable subject matter of claim 26, and some of the subject matter of intervening claims 10 and 23-25. Applicants note that all the subject matter found in dependent claims 23 and 24 have not been placed in claim 1 as Applicants believe that the allowable

subject matter is directed to the “supplying drying gas to a fluid exhaust valve,” as noted by the Examiner in the Office Action mailed September 16, 2010. Thus, since claim 1 includes allowable subject matter, Applicants respectfully request issuance of the present application.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for being indefinite. In particular, the Examiner states that it is unclear how solution falling from the outer side wall can be guided back into the transfer bath if the guide plate is below the transfer bath. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

Specifically, Applicants submit that the “guide plate” 500 is not below the transfer bath, but contrarily, it is “above” the transfer bath. See e.g., FIGS. 7 and 8, wherein the guide plate 500 guides the DI water falling at a point adjacent to the outer sidewall of the outer bath 240, to flow inwardly toward the inner bath 220 or outwardly toward the outer bath 240 space apart from the outer sidewall of the outer bath 240. In this regard, FIG. 8 is reproduced below.



In view of the above, Applicants submit reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 10-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaneda in view of JP 2000-26080 to Nishiwaki ("the Nishiwaki reference").

By the instant amendment, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 26, including some of the subject matter of intervening claims 10 and 23-25, thus, rendering the rejection moot. Accordingly, claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and a notice to such effect is respectfully requested.

Further, because the remaining claims, *viz.* claims 2, 5, and 11-18 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1, claims 2, 5, and 11-18 are also believed to be similarly allowable as depending from an allowable base claim.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 2, 5 and 11-18 are respectfully requested.

Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaneda in view of JP 2000-183019 to Yamamoto.

Applicants submit that since remaining claims, *viz.* claims 3 and 4 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1, claims 3 and 4 are believed to be similarly allowable as depending from an allowable base claim.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 3 and 4 are respectfully requested.

Claims 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaneda in view of Yamamoto and further in view of US Patent Publication No. 2002/0059943 to Inagaki and US Patent Publication No. 2003/0053894 to Matsumoto.

Applicants submit that since remaining claims, *viz.* claims 6 and 7 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1, claims 6 and 7 are believed to be similarly allowable as depending from an allowable base claim.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 6 and 7 are respectfully requested.

Claims 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaneda in view of Nishiwaki and further in view of US Patent Publication No. 2003/0075046 to Lenzing or US Patent Publication No. 2003/0038269 to Creissel.

Applicants submit that since remaining claims, *viz.* claims 23-25 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1, claims 23-25 are believed to be similarly allowable as depending from an allowable base claim.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 23-25 are respectfully requested.

Claims 27-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaneda in view of Nishiwaki and further in view of US Patent Publication No. 2004/0018745 to Tashiro et al.

Applicants submit that since remaining claims, *viz.* claims 27-33 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1, claims 27-33 are believed to be similarly allowable as depending from an allowable base claim.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 27-33 are respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIMS

Claims 41-51 have been added in an effort to provide further, different protection for Applicants' invention. Claims 41-51 are allowable at least for the further features recited therein. For example, claim 41 recites, *inter alia*:

an aligning part to convert substrates to a vertical state to a horizontal state or vice versa, the aligning part includes a first align chamber and a second align chamber which are partitioned.

In particular, Applicants respectfully submit that none of the applied references disclose or suggest "a first align chamber" and "a second align chamber" that are **partitioned**.

In the outstanding Final Office Action, the Examiner admits that the Kaneda and Nishiwaki references fail to teach or suggest the "aligning part." Yet the Examiner attempts to remedy the admitted deficiencies of Kaneda and Nishiwaki by asserting that Tashiro teaches the alleged missing feature of the "aligning part."¹ Applicants respectfully disagree.

¹ See Final Office Action mailed September 16, 2010, page 6, paragraph 11.

Specifically, although Tashiro may disclose an alignment device or orientor 56 for performing alignment of a wafer, it is submitted that the alignment device or orientor 56 cannot convert the substrate to a vertical state to horizontal state (or vice versa). That is, the alignment device or orientor 56 of Tashiro has a rotary table 58 which is rotated by a driving motor along with the wafer W placed thereon. Further, a central mark 58A for positioning is formed at the center of the rotary table 58, and an optical sensor 60 detects the peripheral edge of the wafer W for misalignment. Thus, there is no disclosure of converting the substrate to a vertical state. In fact, one of ordinary skill in the art would appreciate that the alignment device or orientor 56 would not operate properly if the wafer W was oriented vertically since Toshiro explicitly teaches away from such orientation – i.e., the optical sensor 60 would only detect the positional direction of the notch or “orientation flat” of the wafer W. See paragraph [0069] of Toshiro.

Even if *arguendo* that the alignment device or orientor 56 of Toshiro corresponds to the “aligning part” of claim 1, Applicants submit that Toshiro is completely silent of teaching multiple aligning chambers – “a first align chamber” and “a second align chamber”. In an example, non-limiting embodiment, FIGS. 3 and 4 illustrate an aligning part 20 having a first align chamber 120a and a second align chamber 120b which are partitioned thereof. The aligner is provided to the respective align chambers 120a and 120b for positioning into a horizontal and/or vertical directions.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the Toshiro reference fails to disclose, or even suggest, “an aligning part to convert each substrate to a vertical state”

to a horizontal state or vice versa, the aligning part includes a first align chamber and a second align chamber which are partitioned," as recited in claim 41.

Since the rejection fails to disclose or suggest each and every element of the rejected claims, Applicants respectfully submit that no *prima facie* case of obviousness has been established with respect to claim 41.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the Kaneda, the Nishiwaki and the Toshiro references, individually or in any combination, fail to teach or suggest each and every element of claim 41, and therefore, claim 1 is allowable over the cited prior art. Claims 42-51 are dependent from claim 41, and therefore, also allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks and amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the pending objections and rejections has been addressed and overcome, placing the present application in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully requested. Further, the above remarks demonstrate the failings of the outstanding rejections, and are sufficient to overcome the rejections. However, these remarks are not intended to, nor need they, comprehensively address each and every reason for the patentability of the claimed subject matter over the applied prior art. Accordingly, Applicants do not contend that the claims are patentable solely on the basis of the particular claim elements discussed above.

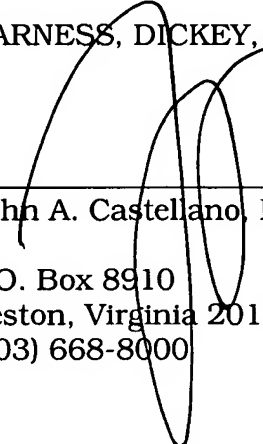
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned, at the telephone number below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By



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